

# Śuddha-bhakti Cintāmaṇi

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**Chapter 25- Unsteady  
Worship of the Name - part 1**

## SBC 25 – Unsteady Worship of the Name - part 1

- The preceding chapter described the process of hearing at the stage of unsteady devotional service.
- Characteristics of the name's worship at that stage were also mentioned.
- This chapter elaborates on unsteady chanting as well as on some kinds of remembrance typical of unsteadiness.
- After hearing and chanting, remembering (smaraṇa) is the next most important item of devotional service.
- All other limbs of devotion are included in these three.
- When devotees chant Hare Kṛṣṇa they simultaneously hear the sound and remember the Lord.

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- When hearing and chanting become attentive, especially to the degree that devotees are fully absorbed in remembrance, worship of the holy name becomes systematic and is called nāma-bhajana.
- This too has already been explained.
- One practises remembrance when one allows the mind to dwell on thoughts of something particular.
- It is the mind's nature to identify with and be influenced by the qualities of the things on which it dwells.
- If it dwells on sense objects, it becomes conditioned to sense enjoyment; but if it dwells on the Lord, it becomes Kṛṣṇa conscious.

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- The Lord explains this to Uddhava:

viṣayān dhyāyataś cittam  
viṣayeṣu viṣajjate  
mām anusmarataś cittam  
mayy eva pravilīyate

- “The mind of one meditating upon the objects of sense gratification is certainly entangled in such objects, but if one constantly remembers Me, then the mind is absorbed in Me.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.14.27)
- Prolonged exposure to sense objects leaves impressions on the mind.
- Thus when devotees take up pure devotional service, they are inclined to remember past sensual encounters, a habit that makes remembrance of Kṛṣṇa difficult.

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- No matter how much devotees try to think of Kṛṣṇa, mundane impressions invoke unbecoming thoughts, which sweep away images of the Lord.
- After repeatedly failing to put the past behind them, devotees begin to believe that thinking of Kṛṣṇa is either artificial or too difficult.
- To control the restless mind—to direct it away from sense objects and keep it fixed on Kṛṣṇa—is certainly the primary challenge for practising devotees.
- Even Arjuna, accustomed as he was to gruelling acts of heroism, argued that it is virtually impossible to control the mind.
- Yet Kṛṣṇa replied that while control is difficult, it can be achieved by detachment from sense objects (vairāgyeṇa) and constant practice (abhyāsenā). [Bhagavad-gītā As It Is 6.35]

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- Without such control, the ultimate Vedic injunction to “Always think of Kṛṣṇa and never forget Him” is impossible to fulfil.
- Therefore devotees should not think that they can be successful in Kṛṣṇa consciousness without learning to control the mind.
- Difficult as it is, they must set about trying to master their senses—subtle and gross.
- True, due to its subtle nature, the mind is more difficult to control than the grosser working or knowledge-acquiring senses.
- True, even while the body is serving Kṛṣṇa the mind tends to be elsewhere.
- Still, Śrīla Prabhupāda insists that devotees rise to the challenge.

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- Kṛṣṇa affirms, “For one can never become a yogī unless he renounces the desire for sense gratification” (na hy asannyasta-saṅkalpo yogī bhavati kaścana). [Bhagavad-gītā As It Is 6.2]
- To qualify themselves for entrance into the realm of remembrance (smaraṇa), devotees must understand and adopt the appropriate means by which to control the mind.
- Practice of remembrance requires preliminary qualification, proper cultivation, and an austere way of life.
- This section briefly discusses these three prerequisites.
- Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura describes the stages of remembrance and their symptoms as follows: “In the neophyte stage one should always engage in hearing kṛṣṇa-kathā.



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- This is called śravaṇa-daśā, the stage of hearing.
- By constantly hearing the transcendental holy name of Kṛṣṇa and hearing of His transcendental form, qualities, and pastimes, one can attain to the stage of acceptance called varaṇa-daśā.
- When one attains this stage, he becomes attached to the hearing of kṛṣṇa-kathā.
- When one is able to chant in ecstasy, he attains the stage of smaraṇāvasthā[smaraṇa] the stage of remembering.” [The Nectar of Instruction 8, purport]
- Thus it is clear that the preliminary qualification for practising remembrance is to hear about Kṛṣṇa.

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- The first flowering of the hearing process is the commitment to practise the implications of what one has heard; that is, to surrender to the Lord.
- Devotees with faith in the Lord must live in ways conducive to controlling the mind.
- They must by all means avoid things that will again agitate the mind with sensual thoughts.
- This is what is meant by “living an austere life.” Kṛṣṇa lists the austerities of the mind as satisfaction, simplicity, gravity, self-control, and purification of one’s existence. [Bhagavad-gītā As It Is 17.16]
- These things are austerities because they deny the mind’s artificial desires; but they are also inherent qualities of the soul.

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- Therefore, in order to revive the soul's spiritual nature, the devotees must embrace the basic austerities upon which Śrīla Prabhupāda insisted in his books and lectures. [See purports to Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.4.49–50 and 9.4.26; Lecture, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 5.5.2, Boston, 28 April, 1969; General lecture, Boston, 26 April, 1969]
- The many guidelines given in the sixty-four items of sādhana-bhakti can be boiled down to three: to absorb oneself in service, to reflect on the teachings of scripture, and to remember Kṛṣṇa directly and indirectly.
- Śrīla Prabhupāda encouraged his followers to somehow or other practise controlling the mind.

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- “The mind is occupied always with something.
- Just practise to occupy the mind with Kṛṣṇa, that’s all.
- Where is the difficulty?” [Lecture, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 5.5.3, Hyderabad, 15 April, 1975]
- Many improper thoughts wander through the minds of neophyte devotees as they wash Kṛṣṇa’s pots or worship His deity.
- But the concentrated effort to improve the quality of their service can curb the mind’s restless nature.
- Mystic yogīs who live in seclusion achieve this spiritual victory only after great effort.

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- The devotees attain the same result with relative ease by constant and conscious devotional engagement.
- In fact, Śrīla Prabhupāda’s definition of a devotee is one who cannot think of anything but Kṛṣṇa: “Because they are either chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, worshipping the deity, going to distribute books, talking about Kṛṣṇa, or eating kṛṣṇa-prasāda, devotees are always absorbed in thoughts of Him.” [Lecture, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.1.19, Denver, 2 July, 1975]
- Śrīla Prabhupāda made controlling the mind sound easy, as he did all aspects of devotional service.
- But as always, Śrīla Prabhupāda also gave practical advice how to accomplish such a feat.

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- He suggested that devotees practice thinking of their services as continual sequences of offerings to Kṛṣṇa.
- In this way they would perfect the process of remembering Him.
- “Service to the deities, as you are asking me, begins whenever you remember them and offer all your services by remembering at the same time.
- All activities, words, everything should be offered as service to the deities, and this offering with remembering will gradually increase as you practise it.” [Letter to Prajāpati, Los Angeles, 16 June, 1972]
- The mental absorption attained by unswerving service can also be had in two other ways: by discussing or reflecting on the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and by seeing everyday events through the eyes of scripture.

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- Śrīla Prabhupāda has made sure that ISKCON members have plenty of books to scrutinize and through which to see the world.
- His Divine Grace gave humankind a treasure house of books for more than just casual reading.
- He wanted devotees to seriously study his books and to discuss their realizations among themselves “from every angle of vision.”
- About scrutinizing the truth, śruti says, “The ātmā is to be seen, listened to, reflected upon, and contemplated” (ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥśrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyaḥ). [Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad 4.5.6]
- Here the phrases “to be seen” and “listened to” indicate that devotees must approach a spiritual master and hear from him about the Supreme Lord as He is described in revealed scripture.

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- After carefully reflecting on and understanding the spiritual master's teachings, pure devotees then apply them by contemplating or remembering Hari under all circumstances.
- A good way to train the mind is to memorize verses, songs, and prayers from scripture.
- This is a well-established tradition in ISKCON, and devotees generally like to do it.
- Memorization is a standard part of a devotee's education.
- Knowing verses enables devotees to speak authoritatively and is a must for their participating attentively in daily worship services such as guru-pūjā.



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- By applying themselves to memorization, devotees learn to practise smaraṇa, which when done continually and systematically, leads to higher stages of worship.
- Unfortunately, in ISKCON, pressing demands for active service often supplant reading and memorizing verses, what to speak of the careful study of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books.
- This devaluing of hearing and chanting was prevalent during Śrīla Prabhupāda's time and remains so even today.
- New devotees are often encouraged only to keep busy in service, and older devotees have often fallen into the bad habit of not reading.

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- Thus the instructions of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam to hear regularly as well as to serve devotees, [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.18] and Śrīla Prabhupāda's admonishment not only to distribute books but to read them as much as possible, [Letter to Trai Dāsa Hawaii, 5 May, 1972] are being neglected more often than adhered to.
- Despite this state of affairs, there are hopeful signs.
- The appearance of educational institutions within ISKCON, for example, is gradually spreading a culture of systematic study to both temples and congregation.
- Hopefully, this trend will eventually balance the exclusive emphasis on service.
- Among the above-mentioned ways to train the mind, prayer is very effective.

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- When devotees offer prayers of repentance, or prayers for shelter, service, or for the benefit of others, they empty the mind of all thoughts other than their plea to the Lord.
- Practised regularly, prayer helps Vaiṣṇavas gain mastery over the mind and the ability to think of Kṛṣṇa at will.
- About techniques for remembering Kṛṣṇa the Lord Himself describes both a direct and an indirect method:

mayy eva mana ādhatsva  
mayi buddhiṁ niveśaya  
nivasīṣyasi mayy eva  
ata ūrdhvaṁ na saṁśayaḥ

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- “Just fix your mind upon Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and engage all your intelligence in Me.
- Thus you will live in Me always, without a doubt.” (Bhagavad-gītā As It Is 12.8)
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- To think of Kṛṣṇa directly by fixing the mind on Him means to spontaneously think of His names, forms, and pastimes.
- To think of Him indirectly by engaging the intelligence in Him means to see Him present everywhere by His divine potencies.
- Both of these are perfections of remembrance.
- But even if devotees are unable to live with Him by constant, uninterrupted thoughts of Him, Kṛṣṇa encourages them to practise thinking of Him (abhyāsa-yoga). [Bhagavad-gītā As It Is 12.9]

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- By such effort they awaken the desire to remember Him constantly.
- When resolute, this desire leads the devotees to always think of Kṛṣṇa, the all-attractive person.
- One cannot achieve this by wishful thinking, however. It demands resolute and skilled practice.
- It requires less qualification to remember Kṛṣṇa indirectly than to remember Him directly.
- This is because indirect remembrance depends on intellectual effort whereas direct remembrance depends on at least some degree of spontaneous attachment.
- Indirect remembrance, being connected to the intellect, is also a useful preaching tool.

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- The general public, accustomed to comprehending things through the intellect, tends to more easily conceive of God as the light of the sun than as a cowherd in Vraja.
- In this way, while using logic and reasoning to convince people to accept Kṛṣṇa consciousness, devotees also practise smaraṇa.
- Although indirect remembrance generally relates to the material world, the end result—the ability to fix the mind in meditation—enables devotees to more easily remember Kṛṣṇa’s form and pastimes, just as persons who have built muscles lifting iron weights can also lift gold weights.
- Śrīla Prabhupāda taught his disciples to cultivate indirect remembrance of Kṛṣṇa by seeing Him in His creation through the knowledge contained in the seventh, ninth, and tenth chapters of the Bhagavad-gītā.

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- “For the neophytes Kṛṣṇa says, raso ’ham apsu kaunteya prabhāsmi śaśi-sūryayoḥ: ‘My dear Kaunteya, I am the taste of water, and I am the light of the sun and the moon.’...
- Think as God directs, and then gradually you’ll see Him.
- Simply remember this one instruction from Bhagavad-gītā...
- If you simply practise this bhakti-yoga, as soon as you taste water and feel satisfied you will think, ‘Oh, here is Kṛṣṇa.’
- Immediately you will remember Kṛṣṇa.
- As soon as you see the sunshine, you will remember, ‘Oh, here is Kṛṣṇa.’

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- As soon as you see the moonshine, you will remember, ‘Oh, here is Kṛṣṇa.’
- And śabdaḥ khe: As soon as you hear some sound in the sky, you will remember, ‘Here is Kṛṣṇa.’” [The Journey of Self-Discovery, chapter 6]
- In addition to practising indirect remembrance, unsteady devotees, according to their ability, should also try to practise direct remembrance.
- Yet it is a misconception to think that one can gain the ability to remember Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes all of a sudden.
- Remembrance develops progressively, beginning with remembrance of Kṛṣṇa’s name.
- It is a journey on which devotees must embark in order to attain līlā-smaraṇa.



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- Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī says that it may be possible for some rare soul to jump to the perfect stage of remembrance, but the path for most Vaiṣṇavas is to first hear the Lord's holy name until their hearts are pure. [This paragraph is based on Bhakti-sandarbhā, anuccheda 25]
- As they hear with purified hearts descriptions of the Lord's transcendental form, they are then empowered to remember that form.
- Further hearing about His qualities enables them to remember those qualities. As they advance, they naturally come to the stage of being able to remember Kṛṣṇa's pastimes and personal associates.
- In this way, serious devotees follow the systematic process of remembrance practised by the previous ācāryas.

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- Such remembrance can be done silently, but Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas prefer to cultivate all the limbs of devotional service in conjunction with chanting the holy names.
- In other words, devotees develop their ability to remember Kṛṣṇa during their chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra and the Gāyatrī mantras.
- Should neophyte devotees be discouraged from trying to do more than fix the minds on the holy name?
- In other words, should they try to remember Kṛṣṇa's pastimes while they chant?
- The answer to this question depends on the qualification of the individual.
- Generally, at the stage of unsteady practice devotees cannot remember Kṛṣṇa for more than moments at a time—and even then mundane ideas and images contaminate their remembrance.

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- But this does not mean that it is wrong for such beginners to think of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes—the ones appropriate for them.
- Neophyte pure devotees aspire for quality remembrance, and their aspiration becomes a reality at the stage of steadiness.
- Rather than discourage beginners from thinking about Kṛṣṇa, preachers should train them to raise their qualification for the same.
- Nārada Muni set the example in his teachings to child Dhruva, who, though qualified by austerity and determination, was barely a neophyte.
- But because Nārada considered his disciple fit, he instructed him to meditate on the incarnations of Kṛṣṇa.

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svecchāvatāra-caritair  
acintya-nija-māyayā  
kariṣyaty uttamaślokaś  
tad dhyāyed dhṛdayaṅ-gamam

- “My dear Dhruva, besides worshipping the deity and chanting the mantra three times a day, you should meditate upon the transcendental activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His different incarnations, as exhibited by His supreme will and personal potencies.” (Śrīmad-Bhagavatam 4.8.57)
- Similarly, second initiated members of ISKCON have been requested to begin meditating on the spiritual master, Lord Caitanya, and Lord Kṛṣṇa.
- They chant the Gāyatrī mantras, which provide impetus to absorb the mind in the objects of worship.

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- Among such duly initiated brāhmaṇas, those who have risen above chanting the Gāyatrī inattentively or merely as a chore seriously cultivate remembrance of the Lord on a daily basis.
- The same may be said of pūjārīs who prior to entering the deity room perform purifying rites, which include a meditative worship of guru, Gaurāṅga, and Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.
- Thus devotees who have been recognized as having some qualification for remembering Kṛṣṇa should humbly attempt to live up to the responsibility with which they have been invested.
- Our previous ācāryas have also written books to help devotees practise remembrance.

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- Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, for example, has given the book Śrī Rūpa-cintāmaṇi, in which he describes the physical features of and ornaments worn by the Divine Couple.
- Interested and fit devotees memorize the beauty of Rādhā and Mādhava in the detail provided, after which they can recall at will what they have learned.
- In that same book he also describes the marks on the Divine Couple's lotus feet.
- Vedic scripture not only encourages its readers to practise remembering the Lord but entices them to do so by offering material benefits.
- For instance, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam declares that daily remembrance of the Lord's incarnations frees a devotee from material miseries [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.3.29] and that remembrance of Kṛṣṇa's instruction to the Śiva-jvara, Lord Śiva's ultimate weapon, will protect devotees from high fever. [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.63.29]

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- Why would transcendental scripture try to motivate its readers to remember Kṛṣṇa by offering material benefits?
- Because whatever their motivation for doing so, devotees gain eternal benefit by thinking of the Supreme Person.
- Thus purified, such souls sacrifice the mundane benefits gained by serving Kṛṣṇa for the higher taste derived from absorption in Him.
- In this way they surpass the greatest yogīs.
- Initiated or not, all devotees chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, and even neophytes occasionally find their minds attracted to Kṛṣṇa’s form or qualities.
- For this reason devotees repeatedly asked Śrīla Prabhupāda, “What should devotees think about while they chant the mahā-mantra?”

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- Should they think of Kṛṣṇa’s form and pastimes, or should they simply hear the sound of the holy names?”
- Śrīla Prabhupāda usually answered that devotees should practise the kind of chanting for which they are fit.
- As beginners perfect their hearing of Kṛṣṇa’s names, they become fit to think of the Lord in a natural way—first His form, then His qualities, and finally His pastimes.
- The following letter is typical of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s teachings on chanting: “Regarding your first question, is it offensive to think of Krishna’s pastimes while chanting, I think you should know that it is not offensive, but rather it is required.
- One must try for the point when he simply hears Krishna, and immediately all of Krishna, His pastimes, His form, His quality, are in his thoughts.



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- So to always be immersed in thoughts of Krishna this is our process.
- When we are full in Krishna then where there can be any chance for maya in us?
- So this is our duty to remember Krishna's pastimes.
- One who cannot remember Krishna, let him always hear Hare Krishna, and then when he has perfected this art, then always he will remember Krishna, His activities, His qualities, and so on." [Letter to Śivānanda, Los Angeles, 4 December, 1968]
- In their writings, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura and Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura repeatedly describe the process outlined above by Śrīla Prabhupāda. [Jaiva Dharma, chapter 20, and Śrī Caitanya's Teachings]

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- Jīva Gosvāmī originally describes it in this way:
- atha krama-prāpta-śravaṇam. tac ca nāma-rūpa-guṇa-līlāmaya-śabdānāmśrotra-sparśaḥ. prathamam nāmnaḥśravaṇam antaḥkaraṇa-śuddhy-artham āpekṣam. śuddhe cāntaḥkaraṇe rūpa-śravaṇena tad-ubhaya-yogyatā bhavati. samyag udite ca rūpe guṇānām sphuraṇam sampadyate. nāma-rūpa-guṇeṣu samyak sphuriteṣv eva līlā-nāma-sphuraṇam suṣṭhu bhavatīty abhipretya sādhana-kramo likhitam.
- “Now follows a description of the sequence of events that happens while hearing about the Lord.
- Hearing about the Lord occurs when the ears touch the sounds of the Lord’s names, forms, qualities, and pastimes.
- First one hears the Lord’s holy name, and by this hearing the heart becomes purified.

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- When the heart is thus purified one hears descriptions of the Lord's form.
- In this way one becomes qualified to hear both the Lord's name and the descriptions of His form.
- When one hears about His form, one naturally also hears about His qualities.
- When one hears the Lord's name and the descriptions of His form and qualities, one also comes to hear about His pastimes.
- In this way, I have written about the sequence of activities in hearing about the Lord." (Bhakti-sandarbha, anuccheda 256) [An almost identical description is found in the Krama-sandarbha commentary on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.5.18, quoted in Gaudīya-kaṅṭhahāra]

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- In summary, the teachings of the ācāryas, from Jīva Gosvāmī to Śrīla Prabhupāda, emphasize the principle of practising according to qualification.
- While chanting the holy names, devotees at the stage of unsteady devotion should first concentrate on the transcendental sound.
- Their smaraṇa should be to hear Kṛṣṇa's names.
- When their concentration is steady, untiring, and full of spiritual taste, they may then begin to think of the Lord's form.
- This second stage of chanting happens as a natural consequence of perfecting the first, and subsequent stages follow one after another, until finally Kṛṣṇa's pastimes manifest themselves to the attentive chanter.

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- It should be noted that steady meditation on the holy name—what to speak of remembrance of Kṛṣṇa’s form, and so on—generally begins while at the stage of steadiness (niṣṭhita-bhajana-kriyā).
- The reader should also note that at the stage of practise (sādhana-bhakti), remembrance of Kṛṣṇa, no matter how successful, is but a material counterpart of the transcendental remembrance that happens at ecstasy and love.
- Such remembrance is a means to develop full spiritual absorption in eternal service and thus should never be mistaken as the goal of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
- And at all costs devotees must avoid imitative practice, attempting to remember without qualification, because such pretence will lead them to fall away from the path of pure devotion.

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- Devotees who try to concentrate on Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes without the ability to fix the mind on the Lord’s name exemplify such artificial practice.
- Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, “Generally it is the process to simply chant and hear, but if Kṛṣṇa’s līlā comes into remembrance, that is very good.
- It should come automatically.
- Not that you are remembering artificially.” [Letter to Prahlādānanda, Bombay, 17 June, 1971]
- Thus the natural way for unsteady devotees to practise remembering Kṛṣṇa is through meditation on the sound of His holy names.
- For such devotees, other kinds of remembrance almost always fall into the category of artificial practice.

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- Proper meditation at unsteady devotion means primarily to hear attentively and to appreciate the transcendental features of Kṛṣṇa's name.
- Besides attentive hearing, do other practices assist devotees in meditating on the Lord's name?
- Śrīla Prabhupāda and his predecessors have given various methods, such as praying for remembrance, remembering the meanings of the mantra, remembering the moods of devotion, and begging for further qualification.
- These methods will now be discussed in brief.
- Since it is Kṛṣṇa who gives the ability to remember or forget, Śrīla Prabhupāda advises his followers to beseech Kṛṣṇa to help them constantly remember His name.

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- Śrīla Prabhupāda taught that by Kṛṣṇa’s mercy even the fallen souls of Kali-yuga could gain mastery over the mind and remember Him.
- Śrīla Prabhupāda once advised a disciple, “Simply our prayer should be, ‘My dear Krishna, please remind me to always chant Your holy name, please do not put me into forgetfulness.
- You are sitting within me as the Supersoul, so You can put me into forgetfulness or into remembering You.
- So please do not put me into forgetfulness.
- Please always remind me to chant, even You send me to hell, it doesn’t matter, just so long as I can always chant Hare Krishna.” [Letter to Devānanda, Los Angeles, 23 November, 1968]



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- Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda instructed neophyte devotees to meditate on the meaning of the mahā-mantra's words.
- Although various ācāryas have explained the words of the mantra, the version most appropriate for beginners is that of Gopāla-guru Gosvāmī. [Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta, chapter 6]
- His reading of the words enables devotees to meditate on Kṛṣṇa according to their ability and at the same time to aspire for higher qualification.
- Such remembrance purifies the heart and brings the mind to rest in Kṛṣṇa.
- The Gosvāmīs reading is as follows:

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- Hare: O Hari! Please steal my mind and deliver me from the bondage of material life.
- Kṛṣṇa: O Kṛṣṇa! Please draw my mind to You.
- Hare: O Hari! Please steal away my heart with Your sweetness.
- Kṛṣṇa: O Kṛṣṇa! Please purify my mind by giving me knowledge of how to worship You through Your devotees.
- Kṛṣṇa: O Kṛṣṇa! Please let me develop a taste for Your service.
- Kṛṣṇa: O Kṛṣṇa! Please make me steady in hearing about Your names, forms, qualities, and pastimes.
- Hare: O Rādhā! Please make me qualified to serve You.

## SBC 25 – Unsteady Worship of the Name - part 1

- **Hare:** O Rādhā! Please guide me in my service to You.
- **Hare:** O Rādhā! Please make me qualified to hear Your pastimes with Your beloved Kṛṣṇa.
- **Rāma:** O Kṛṣṇa! Please make me qualified to hear Your pastimes with Your beloved Rādhā.
- **Hare:** O Rādhā! Please let me see Your pastimes with Your beloved.
- **Rāma:** O Kṛṣṇa! Please engage me in remembering Your names, forms, qualities, and pastimes.
- **Rāma:** O Kṛṣṇa! Please engage me in remembering Your name, form, qualities, and pastimes.

## SBC 25 – Unsteady Worship of the Name - part 1

- **Rāma:** O Kṛṣṇa! Please make me qualified for serving in Your pastimes.
- **Hare:** O Hari! Please make me Your servant and enjoy with me as You like.
- **Hare:** O Hari! I am Your eternal servant. Please make me fit to give You pleasure.
- Our ācāryas have also encouraged devotees to remember the moods in which they should chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and execute devotional service.
- Foremost among these is humility, which Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī strongly requests all Vaiṣṇavas to embrace.

## SBC 25 – Unsteady Worship of the Name - part 1

- He first cites the third text of Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka:

tṛṇād api su-nīcena  
taror api sahiṣṇunā  
amāninā māna-dena  
kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ

- “One who thinks himself lower than the grass, who is more tolerant than a tree, and who does not expect personal honour yet is always prepared to give all respect to others can very easily always chant the holy name of the Lord.”

## SBC 25 – Unsteady Worship of the Name - part 1

- Then he writes:

ūrdhva-bāhu kari' kahoṅ, śuna, sarva-loka  
nāma-sūtre gāṅthi' para kaṅṭhe ei śloka

- “Raising my hands, I declare, ‘Everyone please hear me! String this verse on the thread of the holy name and wear it on your neck for continuous remembrance.’”  
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 17.31–32)
- Finally, devotees should pray for the qualification to become advanced worshippers of the holy name.
- As mentioned before, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains that devotees can be freed from unwanted habits that obstruct the path of pure chanting by remembering the demons Kṛṣṇa kills. [Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta, chapter 6]

## SBC 25 – Unsteady Worship of the Name - part 1

- Śrīla Prabhupāda encourages devotees to cry out to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, to beg the Lord to lift them out of māyā and to engage them in service. [Letter to Subāla Dāsa, Los Angeles, 8 July, 1969]
- The Ṭhākura advises devotees to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa before the deity so that impressions of the Lord's form may be embedded in their mind. [Śrī Hari-nāma-cintāmaṇi, chapter 15]
- These last paragraphs contain many of the aspirations that devotees can remember.
- No doubt by sincere appeals the holy name will fulfil such desires.
- Spiritual immaturity impedes one from developing the sustained determination needed to properly cultivate these and other ways of remembering Kṛṣṇa and His name.

## SBC 25 – Unsteady Worship of the Name - part 1

- Steady remembrance is called meditation (dhyāna), and two forms of unsteady remembrance precede it: recollection (smaraṇa or smṛti) and initial absorption (dhāraṇā).
- The initial effort devotees make to think about Kṛṣṇa and search for Him, with minds still involved in sensual thoughts, is called recollection.
- When their mind does become momentarily free of all other things but Kṛṣṇa, devotees come in touch with what is called initial absorption.
- Although learning the art of remembering Kṛṣṇa is difficult at first, practising devotees should not feel ill-equipped for the task.
- Each devotional activity they perform has its purpose in serving the one common aim of never forgetting Him.



## SBC 25 – Unsteady Worship of the Name - part 1

- Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.23.45) confirms this:

dānaṁ sva-dharmo niyamo yamaś ca  
śrutaṁ ca karmāṇi ca sad-vratāni  
sarve mano-nigraha-lakṣaṇāntāḥ  
paro hi yogo manasaḥ samādhiḥ

- “Charity, prescribed duties, observance of major and minor regulative principles, hearing from scripture, pious works, and purifying vows all have as their final aim the subduing of the mind. Indeed, concentration of the mind on the Supreme is the highest yoga.”
- Therefore the hearing that goes on when devotees attend Bhāgavatam class, study scripture, or discuss with other Vaiṣṇavas, is the foundation for always remembering Kṛṣṇa’s names, and always remembering Kṛṣṇa’s names is the foundation for remembering His forms and so on.

## SBC 25 – Unsteady Worship of the Name - part 1

- Indeed, real followers of Lord Caitanya not only remember the holy names but dedicate their lives to serving them.
- Such service means not only to chant but to preach the truths of the holy name as the only religion for this age.
- Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura concludes his song Vaiṣṇava Ke by proclaiming that congregational chanting—which includes preaching—awakens not only remembrance of Kṛṣṇa but of one’s own spiritual form.
- Our parama-gurudeva writes: “This humble servant of Rādhā and Her beloved Kṛṣṇa always hopes for kīrtana, and he begs all to loudly sing the names of Lord Hari.

## SBC 25 – Unsteady Worship of the Name - part 1

- The transcendental power of congregational chanting automatically awakens remembrance of the Lord and His divine pastimes in relation to one's own eternal spiritual form.
- Only at that time does it become possible to go off to a solitary place and engage in the confidential worship of Their Lordships.” [Vaiṣṇava Ke 19]
- Such is the potency of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
- Therefore devotees should not think that preaching distracts them from their “real” business of becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious.
- Preaching is as much sādhana as are attempts at bhajana, and in the neophyte stages of spiritual life, even more so.

## SBC 25 – Unsteady Worship of the Name - part 1

- As a result of prolonged and constant effort to purify themselves in the company of other Vaiṣṇavas, unsteady devotees gradually gain mastery over the mind.
- They learn to see Kṛṣṇa everywhere and to attentively hear and faithfully serve the holy name.
- Freed of offences, their bodily, vocal, and mental acts of devotion become steady and they gain the intermediate qualification for devotional service (madhyamādhikāra).
- The result of hearing and applying what they have heard further qualifies them to purposefully hear Kṛṣṇa's eternal pastimes and to systematically remember them.
- In this way, unsteady worship of the holy name gradually transforms into steady and systematic worship.

## SBC 25 – Unsteady Worship of the Name - part 1

- Jīva Gosvāmī describes this transformation:
- “Hearing descriptions of the various incarnations of the Lord eventually brings one to the stage at which one’s thoughts are fixed in Lord Kṛṣṇa, the original Supreme Personality of Godhead.
- This is described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.8.3): ‘Narrations concerning the Lord who possesses wonderful potencies are certainly auspicious for living beings in all planets.
- O greatly fortunate Śukadeva Gosvāmī, please continue narrating Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam so that I can place my mind on the Supreme Soul, Lord Kṛṣṇa, and being completely freed from material qualities, thus relinquish this body.’

## SBC 25 – Unsteady Worship of the Name - part 1

- In this verse the word hareḥ means ‘of the various incarnations of the Lord,’ and the phrase akhilātmani kṛṣṇe means ‘to Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, in whom all incarnations are present, and who is also the friend of Arjuna.’
- This verse was spoken by Mahārāja Parīkṣit.” [Bhakti-sandarbhā, anuccheda 325]

nca, go, bhakta-sage kara sakrtananāca, gāo, bhakta-saṅge kara saṅkīrtana  
kṛṣṇa-nāma upadeśi’ tāra’ sarva-jana

- “My dear child, continue dancing, chanting and performing saṅkīrtana in association with devotees. Furthermore, go out and preach the value of chanting kṛṣṇa-nāma, for by this process You will be able to deliver all fallen souls.” [Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 7.92]